

January 9, 1986

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, it is a little difficult for me to argue this proposed rule change because I assume anything that I might say could be perceived as a protection of turf or whatever the customary thing that we think of. I certainly recognize the good intentions of the sponsors and I applaud them for the desire to better understand the budgets of all state government, particularly those agencies they work with. I am not so naive that I believe that anything other than what they said that it is not an attempt to do anything other than that. It is not a reflection on the Appropriations Committee or members of it, the Chairman, or anyone else. I have nevertheless a lot of concern about how this may actually function when you get all done. The appropriation process is essentially a mixture of hard work, consensus ability, sometimes just a plain little good luck. There is more anguish than reward. There is more pain than fun through the whole process and particularly in these economic times that are stressful and even when it is not stressful it isn't always all that neat. So, anyway, I do not believe, as they have all stated, that this is a proposed rule change to affect the authority of an particular committee, but I do have some concerns I would like to express to you notwithstanding the good arguments that are made. Essentially, what I become concerned with that sometimes today's reform becomes tomorrow's tyranny or tomorrow's confusion. So before we leap into this, I want to call your attention to some things that I hope that you would think of. It is permissive, as they have indicated, and I suspect...you know, I would not mind a bit if without a rule then there is a committee or two or three or several who want to experiment a little bit during this session to see how it might function before it is actually placed in the rules and we start tinkering with the rules trying to correct whatever problems we may see later on, it wouldn't bother me if it is informally attempted for those who have an interest to do it. But I am fairly certain that if we really try to do it, the amount of time that you are going to find it taking...well, if you want to but it is going to be an additional problem, the information on budget requests, the options, the deliberations now or as has been stated where all can see, attend, participate, ask whatever information that they may want. What I really am concerned about is if we once start it, that you are probably going to lay in a whole new process in a matter of time in the development of the budget with repetitions of testimony,